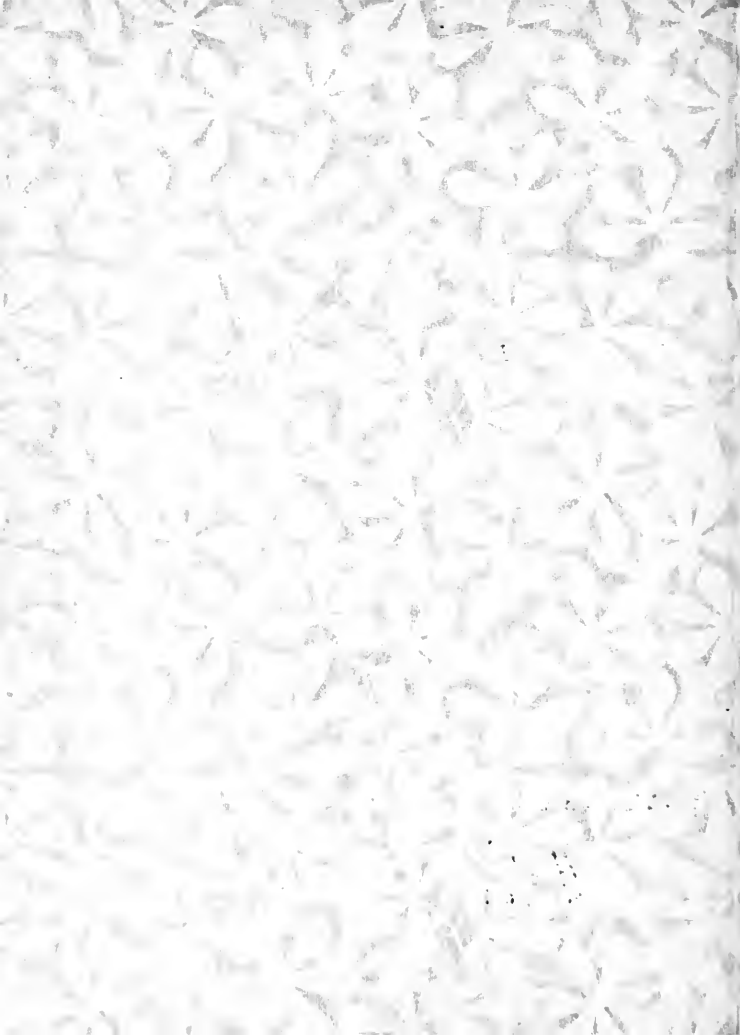


Abraham Lincoln,

(A PRIZE TREATISE,)

BY REV. D. T. PHILLIPS.



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Stewart

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A PRIZE TREATISE

—ON—

THE CHARACTER OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

BY REV. D. T. PHILLIPS,

NEW YORK.

With an Introductory Letter from the Hon. Thomas L. James.
And the adjudication on the various essays for competition
by Rev. W. C. Roberts, D. D. Secretary of the Presbyterian
Home Missions, New York.

NEW YORK:

JOHN M. DAVIS, TYPOGRAPHER, 40 FULTON STREET.

1864.

LETTER FROM HON. THOMAS L. JAMES.

NEW YORK. September 17th. 1884.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I am pleased to learn that at the urgent solicitation of your friends, you have concluded to publish your prize essays, which were so highly commended by the adjudicators at the Welsh Literary Festival, at which I had the honor of presiding.

I trust your undertaking may prove to you a financial success. I am glad to learn that the character of the illustrious martyr President, Abraham Lincoln, will be the first volume issued. I shall take a number of copies as soon as they are published.

I have the honor to be,

Cordially your friend,

THOMAS L. JAMES.

To the Rev. D. T. Phillips.



THE

Character of Abraham Lincoln.

WAS there ever a more well-rounded character than the subject of our sketch? That character was distinguished by some of the most noteworthy traits. Born at an obscure place in Hardin County, Kentucky, it might well have been asked "Can any good come out of that Nazareth?" "Come and see." His early education was of the most meagre kind. His father's inability to read or write was greatly to his disadvantage, but he was religiously trained, his parents being devout and devoted members of the Baptist

We are indebted to Messrs. J. G. Holland, H. J. Raymond, W. T. Coggleshall, George Bancroft, J. B. McClure, Carpenter, and several journals, for the facts embodied in this treatise.

Church—a denomination which has not only given us our present honored chief magistrate, but also many of the most renowned statesmen and leaders in our great commonwealth. When Lincoln was eight years old his parents migrated to Indiana, floating down the Ohio on a raft. Having been settled in their wilderness home about a year, his mother died. He was then ten years old. Through his mother's patient and loving efforts, he was able to read his Bible, which served as a "lamp to his feet, and a light to his path." When nineteen years of age, he was hired on a flatboat bound for New Orleans, his wages being ten dollars a month. On his return, he accompanied his father and stepmother to the neighborhood of Decatur, Illinois, driving before him a herd of cattle. Reaching their destination after a journey of fifteen days, he assisted in the erection of a log cabin and split rails to enclose the farm. He was subsequently a flatboat hand, clerk, captain of a company of volunteers in the Black Hawk war, country storekeeper, postmaster, surveyor, lawyer, legislator, president. Despite his early disadvantages, he availed himself of every opportunity to borrow books, which he would punctually return to the owners. He thus became familiar with Bunyan's *Pilgrims' Progress*, Esop's *Fables*, Weem's *Life of Washington*, and the *Life of Henry Clay*.

These books he studiously read. In process of time he mastered the English grammar, thoroughly

digested the plays of Shakespeare, and devoted himself to the study of history, geometry, and jurisprudence, so that, defective as his early training may have been, he became a man of culture. Just as we were revising this essay, we were specially delighted to find these timely and truthful words in a recent discriminating review in the *Examiner*, New York, on "A New Life of Abraham Lincoln," by W. O. Stoddard.

"The common idea of Lincoln's lack of culture is most absurd. It is true as Mr. Stoddard again shows, that his early education was of the slightest, being little more than learning to read, write and cipher in the simplest manner. It is true that he never attended an academy, or a college, never learned any foreign language, and to the day of his death had only the merest smattering of any history or literature, except that of the English race. But what of that? We have gone far in these days towards getting rid of the superstition that a man cannot be a thoroughly cultivated man without a college education, or half learning two or three foreign languages. No one thinks of John Bright as an uncultivated man, or of John Bunyan or William Shakespeare as uncultivated men. He would be very bold, not to say foolhardy, who should pronounce Plato and Aristotle uncultivated men, yet they attended no college, and knew no language or literature than that of their own country. The learning of foreign languages

and literature is not culture, but the means of culture; and if the culture is attained by some other means, well and good. We do not disparage a college education; neither will we disparage the lack of a college education.

Lincoln's early education was gained more from the Bible than from the schoolmaster. In this he was like many others who have risen from poverty to distinction. In his early manhood he became passionately fond of Shakespeare, and knew his plays almost by heart. Any man who is thoroughly versed in these two books cannot be called an uncultivated man. To this he added the study of geometry, which he mastered thoroughly, of English grammar, of law, and later of the science of law—jurisprudence. In American history he was deeply read; and politics, both as a science and an art, was an open book to him." On his admission to the bar, he soon rose to eminence. When twenty-five years old, he was sent to the State legislature, and was thrice re-elected. Devoting his chief attention to politics, he soon became a leading spirit. He was elected to Congress, and so ably did he represent his district, and so eloquently did he harangue the people daily on great national questions, that he was nominated for Senator the second time, against the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas. The two rivals stumped the State together. The debate noted for its brilliant statesmanship, keen logic, and sparkling wit, won for Lincoln a national reputation. His

party, however, being in the minority, he was defeated.

But he could not be hid. He was a national character. He was destined by Providence to occupy the highest and most responsible position in the republic. After his accession to the Presidency of the United States, his history, like that of Washington, is identified with his country's history.

And here we find it difficult to know where to begin in the enumeration of his wonderful qualities. He is one of those characters that tower as a pillar of strength in this nation. He showed his greatness and aptitude in the choice of his cabinet. Other Presidents selected their cabinets generally from among their intimate friends, or who in any way helped them in their election. But with a few exceptions, Lincoln's cabinet was selected from the men who had been his rivals—who had expected the nomination before his name became so prominent. Chief-Justice Chase was placed over the Treasury; Secretary Seward was put in charge of the State Department; General Cameron was the first Secretary of War under his administration; Mr. Bates, of St. Louis, who also had expected to be nominated, was made one of his Secretaries. He thus gathered about him the very men who had been his rivals, but they were men well fitted for their respective posts. While he towered above them all, and was the centre and master-spirit in directing the affairs of the Administration, yet

these grand ministers proved indispensable helpers.

HIS URBANITY.

He belonged to that class of men of whom it is proverbially said "they cannot harm a fly." His favorite motto was, "With friendship for all, enmity to none." He knew no malice. Hatred was far from his nature. He would speak evil of no man, whether foe or friend—our late president being a worthy successor in this respect. Lincoln seemed to live above the trivial opposition that was around him, and to be filled with great views and far reaching thoughts. The only circumstance that savored a little of severity was the incident which took place soon after the nomination of McClellan, in the second canvass. Bishops Simpson and Ames went to pay him their respects. Large numbers were there on all kinds of business, and as they were gradually thinning out, Lincoln observed them. Bishop Ames arose and said: "Mr. President, I have been looking around the room to see if I could find a Bible, but cannot see any. Perhaps you do not keep any here." This was said with a smile. "Now," replied Lincoln, "you want to go away and tell that I don't keep a Bible, but I was reading one this morning." "Well," said the Bishop, "I merely wanted to turn to a place where Moses was reminded that the burden of the people was too much for him, and that he should seek out wise men to help him." "Oh, yes," replied Lincoln, "I know;

that was Moses' father-in-law who gave him that advice. By the way, I don't think I resemble Moses so much in anything else as in one particular I was thinking of this morning. Moses worked very hard for the children of Israel; but when he went up into the mountain and was out of sight, what do you think the people did? Why, before he got down again they set up a calf to worship." This amusing reference was made a few days after McClellan's nomination. But it was so playfully done that no one could charge him with severity.

"Upon entering the President's office one afternoon," says a Washington correspondent, "I found Mr. Lincoln busily counting greenbacks."

"'This, sir,' he said, 'is something out of my usual line; but a President of the United States has a multiplicity of duties not specified in the Constitution or acts of Congress. This is one of them. This money belongs to a poor negro who is a porter in the Treasury Department, at present very bad with the small-pox. He is now in hospital, and could not draw his pay because he could not sign his name. I have been at considerable trouble to overcome the difficulty and get it for him, and have at length succeeded in *cutting red tape*, as you newspaper men say. I am now dividing the money and putting by a portion labelled, in an envelope, with my own hands, according to his wish;' and he proceeded to endorse the package very carefully."

No one witnessing the transaction could fail to appreciate the goodness of heart which prompted the President of the United States to turn aside for a time from his weighty cares to succor one of the humblest of his fellow-creatures in sickness and sorrow.

At the semi-annual meeting of the New Jersey Historical Society, held in Newark, N. J., Rev. Dr. Sheldon, of Princeton, read a memorial of their late president, Rev. R. K. Rodgers, D.D., in which appears the following fresh incident concerning Mr. Lincoln and the war:

"One day during the war, Dr. Rodgers was called on by a man in his congregation, who, in the greatest distress, told him that his son, a soldier in the army, had just been sentenced to be shot for desertion, and begged the minister's interposition. The Doctor went to Washington with the wife and infant child of the condemned man, and sent his card up to Mr. Lincoln. When admitted, the President said:

"'You are a minister, I believe. What can I do for you, my friend?'

"The reply was: 'A young man from my congregation in the army has so far forgotten his duty to his country and his God as to desert his colors, and is sentenced to die. I have come to ask you to spare him.'

"With characteristic quaintness the President replied: 'Then you don't want him hurt, do you?'

“‘Oh, no,” said the petitioner, ‘I did not mean that; he deserves punishment, but I beg for him time to prepare to meet his God.’

“‘Do you say he has father, wife and child?’ said Mr. Lincoln. ‘Yes.’ ‘Where do you say he is?’

“On being told, he turned to his secretary, said a few words in an undertone, of which that official made note, and added to Dr. Rodgers, ‘You have your request. Tell his friends I have reprieved him.’

“With a ‘God bless you, Mr. President,’ Dr. Rodgers turned away to bear the glad tidings to the distressed family.”

HIS HUMOR.

It would be impossible within the circumscribed limits of this essay, to refer to all his humorous and quaint expressions. A few must suffice.

Upon being told that a gentleman upon whom he was about to confer a valuable appointment had been bitterly opposed to his re-nomination, he said: “I suppose that Judge — having been disappointed before, did behave pretty ugly; but that wouldn’t make him less fit for this place, and I have a Scriptural authority for appointing him. You recollect that while the Lord on Mount Sinai was getting out a commission for Aaron, that same Aaron was at the foot of the mountain, making a false God—a golden

calf for the people to worship; yet Aaron got his commission, you know."

A gentleman from Wisconsin came in with a senator to ask for a consulship at some prominent European point. "But," replied Lincoln, "I don't know of any vacancy. I would like to serve you and your friend very much, but you know office-holders never resign and seldom die, and I don't know when I shall have a vacancy."

The gentleman looked disappointed and discouraged. Lincoln, noticing him, added in sympathy: "After a while may be some one will die, or possibly some one will resign. But I cannot make any changes. I have no time or strength for it. When I came into the office, I was so occupied for several months that I could hardly get time to eat or sleep for the applications that were made. And now to attempt to make a change, I could not do it in the midst of the war. Besides, if I did remove any one, why, the very next day his aunt, his uncle, and his grandmother would be here to know why I removed him, and thus disgraced him. Now when I came into office it was not so. The Democrats had been in possession of the offices, and they expected all to go. They were just ready to pack up, and I had nothing to do but to make appointments; and that was more than I could stand. Yes, they were like a friend of mine out in Illinois, who moved so often that the very chickens got to know it. And whenever he drove up in his

two-horse wagon with a white cover on top of it, the chickens all ran and lay down, and crossed their legs. It was just so with the men that went out of office; but I cannot make any changes now." This humorous interview made the gentleman depart in a pleasant mood and hopeful spirit.

During the war a committee composed of the leading citizens of New York visited him. One of the gentlemen who presumed on his acquaintance with Lincoln stepped up, and in the lowest tone of voice, said: "Mr. President, I would like to know where Burnside's fleet is going." Burnside had just then sailed with a fleet, but his destination was unknown. "Well," replied Lincoln, in a low tone of voice, "Would you very much like to know?" "Yes." "Well, now," said Lincoln, "if I would tell you, perhaps you would tell some one else." "No, I would not." Putting his hand up to his mouth, Lincoln whispered loud enough for all to hear, "He's gone to sea."

We shall never hear the last of the little stories with which he illustrated his conversation and his early stump speeches. His anecdotes were seldom told for the sake of display, but because they fitted in just where they came, and shed a light on the argument that nothing else could. He was brimful of humor. He could occasionally get off a good pun. He did so once on the Christian name of a friend, to whom he said, "You have yet to be elected to the

place I hold, but Noah's *reign* was before Abraham." He thought that the chief characteristic of American humor was its grotesqueness and extravagance; and the story of the man who was so tall he was "laid out in a rope-walk;" the soprano voice that was so high it had to be climbed over by a ladder; and the Dutchman's complaint of "somebody tying his dog loose," all make an abiding place in his mind.

He once remarked that he had a dread of people who could not appreciate a little joke, or see fun in any humorous representation. He instanced a member of his own Cabinet, of whom he quoted the saying of Sydney Smith, "that it required a surgical operation to get a joke into his head."

His first political speech in 1832, when only twenty-three years of age, was exceedingly brief, his opponent having occupied too much time: "Gentlemen, fellow citizens: I presume you know whom I am. I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by many friends to become a candidate for the Legislature. My politics can be briefly stated. I am in favor of the internal improvement system, and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I shall be thankful. If not, it will be all the same."

Queen Victoria once sent him a message through her minister, Lord Lyons, who was a bachelor. "May it please your Excellency, I hold in my hand," said Lord Lyons, "an autographic letter from my royal

mistress, Queen Victoria, which I have been commanded to present to your Excellency. In it she informs your Excellency that her son, his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is about to contract a matrimonial alliance with her Royal Highness, the Princess Alexandra, of Denmark." Then presenting the letter, he waited for the reply. He got it. It was very short, simple and expressive: "Lord Lyons, go thou and do likewise." The aristocratic minister was confounded, and we have never learned from that day to this what diplomatic reply was sent to the Queen.

A good instance of the execution which he sometimes effected with a story, occurred in the Legislature. There was a troublesome member from Wabash County, who gloried particularly in being a "strict constructionalist." He found something "unconstitutional" in every measure that was brought forward for discussion. He was a member of the Judiciary Committee, and was very apt, after giving every measure a heavy pounding, to advocate its reference to this committee. No amount of sober argument could floor the member from Wabash. At last he came to be considered a man to be silenced, and Mr. Lincoln was resorted to for an expedient by which this object might be accomplished. He soon afterwards honored the draft thus made upon him.

A measure was brought forward in which Mr. Lincoln's constituents were interested, when the member

from Wabash rose and discharged all his batteries upon its unconstitutional points. Mr. Lincoln then took the floor, and, with the quizzical expression of features which he could assume at will, and a mirthful twinkle in his gray eyes, said: "Mr. Speaker, the attack of the member from Wabash on the constitutionality of this measure, reminds me of an old friend of mine. He's a peculiar looking old fellow, with shaggy, overhanging eyebrows, and a pair of spectacles under them. (Everybody turned to the member from Wabash, and recognized a personal description.) One morning just after the old man got up, he imagined, on looking out of his door, that he saw rather a lively squirrel on a tree near his house. So he took down his rifle and fired at the squirrel, but the squirrel paid no attention to the shot. He loaded and fired again, and again, until, at the thirteenth shot, he set down his gun impatiently, and said to his boy, who was looking on:

"'Boy, there's something wrong about this rifle.'

"'Rifle's all right, I know 'tis,' responded the boy, 'but where's your squirrel?'

"'Don't you see him, humped up about half way up the tree?' inquired the old man, peering over his spectacles, and getting mystified.

"'No, I don't,' responded the boy; and then turning and looking into his father's face, he exclaimed, 'I see your squirrel! You've been firing at a louse on your eyebrow!'"

The story needed neither application nor explanation. The House was in convulsions of laughter; for Mr. Lincoln's skill in telling a story was not inferior to his appreciation of its points and his power of adapting them to the case in hand. It killed off the member from Wabash, who was very careful afterwards not to provoke any allusions to his "eyebrows."

In a time of despondency, some visitors were telling the President of the "breakers" so often seen ahead—"this time surely coming." "That," said he, "suggests the story of the school-boy, who never could pronounce the names of 'Shadrach,' 'Meshach,' and 'Abednego.' He had been repeatedly whipped for it without effect. Sometime afterwards he saw the names in the regular lessons for the day. Putting his finger upon the place, he turned to his next neighbor, an older boy, and whispered 'Here comes those *tormented Hebrews again!*'"

The Hon. Mr. Hubbard, of Connecticut, once called upon the President, in reference to a newly invented gun, concerning which a committee had been appointed to make a report.

The "report" was sent for, and when it came in was found to be of the most voluminous description. Mr. Lincoln glanced at it, and said: "I should want a new lease of life to read this through!" Throwing it down upon the table, he added: "Why can't a committee of this kind occasionally exhibit a grain

of common sense? If I send a man to buy a horse for me, I expect him to tell me his *points*—not how many *hairs* there are in his tail.”

Some gentlemen fresh from a Western tour, during a call at the White House, referred in the course of conversation to a body of water in Nebraska, which bore an Indian name signifying “weeping water.” Mr. Lincoln instantly responded: “As ‘laughing water,’ according to Longfellow, is ‘Minnehaha,’ this evidently should be ‘Minneboohoo.’”

An editorial in a New York journal, opposing Lincoln’s re-nomination, is said to have called out from him the following story: A traveler on the frontier found himself out of his reckoning one night in a most inhospitable region. A terrific thunder-storm came up, to add to his trouble. He floundered along until his horse at length gave out. The lightning afforded him the only clew to his way, but the peals of thunder were frightful. One bolt, which seemed to crash the earth beneath him, brought him to his knees. By no means a praying man, his petition was short and to the point—“O Lord, if it is all the same to you, give us a little *more light and a little less noise.*”

Concerning a drollery of President Lincoln, this story is told:

“During the rebellion an Austrian count applied to President Lincoln for a position in the army. Being introduced by the Austrian minister, he needed,

of course, no further recommendation ; but, as if fearing that his importance might not be duly appreciated, he proceeded to explain that he was a count ; that his family were ancient and highly respectable ; when Lincoln, with a merry twinkle in his eye, tapping the aristocratic lover of titles on the shoulder, in a fatherly way, as if the man had confessed to some wrong, interrupted in a soothing tone, ‘Never mind ; you shall be treated with just as much consideration for all that !’”

On a certain occasion, the President was induced by a committee of gentlemen to examine a newly-invented “repeating” gun, the peculiarity of which was that it prevented the escape of gas. After due inspection, he said : “Well, I believe this really does what it is represented to do. Now, have any of you heard of any machine or invention for preventing the escape of ‘gas’ from newspaper establishments?”

On one occasion, when Lincoln and Douglas were “stumping” the State of Illinois together as political opponents, Douglas, who made the first speech, remarked that in early life, his father, who he said was an excellent cooper by trade, apprenticed him out to learn the cabinet business.

This was too good for Lincoln to let pass, so when his turn came to reply, he said :

“I had understood before that Mr. Douglas had been bound out to learn the cabinet-making business, which is all well enough, but I was not aware until

now that his father was a cooper. I have no doubt, however, that he was one, and I am certain, also, that he was a very good one, for (here Lincoln gently bowed toward Douglas) he has made *one of the best whisky casks I have ever seen.*"

As Douglas was a short, heavy-set man, and occasionally imbibed, the pith of the joke was at once apparent, and most heartily enjoyed by all.

On another occasion, Douglas in one of his speeches, made a strong point against Lincoln by telling the crowd that when he first knew Mr. Lincoln he was a "grocery-keeper," and sold whisky, cigars, etc. "Mr. L.," he said, "was a *very good bar-tender!*" This brought the laugh on Lincoln, whose reply, however, soon came, and then the laugh was on the other side.

"What Mr. Douglas has said, gentlemen," replied Mr. Lincoln, "is true enough; I did keep a grocery and I did sell cotton, candles and cigars, and sometimes whisky; but I remember in those days that Mr. Douglas was one of my *best customers!*"

"Many a time have I stood on one side of the counter and sold whisky to Douglas on the other side, but the difference between us *now* is this: I have left my side of the counter, but Mr. Douglas *still sticks to his* as tenaciously as ever!"

While Judge Logan, of Springfield, Ill., was Lincoln's partner, two farmers, who had a misunderstanding respecting a horse trade, went to law. By

mutual consent the partners in law became antagonists in this case. On the day of the trial Mr. Logan, having bought a new shirt, open in the back, with a huge standing collar, dressed himself in extreme haste, and put on the shirt with the bosom at the back, a linen coat concealing the blunder. He dazed the jury with his knowledge of "horse points," and as the day was sultry, took off his coat and summed up in his shirt-sleeves.

Lincoln sitting behind him, took in the situation, and when his turn came, remarked to the jury :

"Gentlemen, Mr. Logan has been trying for over an hour to make you believe he knows more about a horse than these honest old farmers who are witnesses. He has quoted largely from his 'horse doctor,' and now, gentlemen, I submit to you, (here he lifted Logan out of his chair, and turned him with his back to the jury and the crowd, at the same time flipping up the enormous standing collar) what dependence can you place in his horse knowledge when he *has not sense enough to put on his shirt?*"

The roars of laughter that greeted this exhibition and the verdict that Lincoln got soon after, gave Logan a permanent prejudice against "bosom shirts."

HIS CAUTION.

This was to be seen pre-eminently in his grand character. Before he moved in any matter he would first of all thoroughly survey the whole ground. For

instance, in the beginning of the war he was loath to emancipate the slaves. It was suggested to him in the presence of some Kentuckians that the war could not result favorably until arms were put into the hands of colored men. He spoke strongly against it, alleging that it would produce a complete uprising all through Kentucky and Maryland, and we could not afford to do it; that we must prevent the war being carried into the Northern States. This led to a discussion, in which the Kentuckians joined, and with whom he then agreed. But he made use of this singular but notable remark, which showed him to be a friend of liberty: "We must save the Union with slavery, if we can; without slavery, if we must." So after he had fully surveyed the ground; after he had found that our arms were not making the progress anticipated; after he found that the colored men were employed in the South to dig intrenchments and ditches, and to do any work which would sustain and support the Confederate army, then he was prepared to issue the Proclamation of Emancipation. He did it most carefully; he gave three months' notice; issued his anticipatory proclamation; gave the South ample time to lay down their arms and become citizens again, or, as the penalty, he would issue this proclamation, and set the captive free.

No one can charge him with rashness or recklessness. He gave the subject the most careful thought;

was cautious almost to a fault, and the *cause* of that memorable sanguinary contest may be attributed to the rebellious spirit of the Southern States.

This element of caution characterized him in his public appointments. While he cared for his friends, yet those friends possessed the necessary qualifications for their posts of honor. When his most intimate friends did not possess the needful qualifications, he scrupled not to act conscientiously in the matter. Hard as it would be for him personally to refuse them office, yet his rapt interest in his nation's welfare forbade him conferring office on any who were utterly unfitted for it. Of an application for office by an old friend, not fit for the place he sought, he said: "I had rather resign my place and go away from here than refuse him, if I consulted my own personal feelings; but refuse him I must." Because of this peculiar caution so characteristic of him, he was often charged with being slow. Well, let it be slowness; much of our safety and success are owing to it. He is to-day admired and loved for what he *did not do*, as well as for what he *did do*. Acknowledging that he was slow in arriving at conclusions, he said he could not help that, but he believed that when he did arrive at conclusions they were clear, and stuck by. He was a profound believer in his own fixity of purpose, and took pride in saying that his long deliberations made it possible for him to stand by his own acts when they were once resolved

upon. Alas! it would have been a relief to the country at one time in our history if this trait in his character had been better understood. It was absolutely necessary in those days of rash temper and party measures, to have a man of caution at the helm of government.

When Lincoln's judgment, which acted slowly, but which was almost as immovable as the eternal hills when settled, was grasping some subject of importance, the arguments against his own desires seemed uppermost in his mind, and in conversing upon it, he would present those arguments to see if they could be rebutted.

This caution was illustrated by the interview between himself and the Chicago delegation of clergymen, appointed to urge upon him the issue of a Proclamation of Emancipation, which occurred September 13th, 1862, more than a month after he had declared to the Cabinet his established purpose to take this step.

He said to this committee: "I do not want to issue a document that the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the Pope's bull against the comet!" After drawing out their views upon the subject, he concluded the interview with these memorable words:

"Do not misunderstand me, because I have mentioned these objections. They indicate the difficulties which have thus far prevented my action in

some such way as you desire. I have not decided against a proclamation of liberty to the slaves, but hold the matter under advisement. And I can assure you that the subject is on my mind, by day and night, more than any other. Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do! I trust that, in the freedom with which I have canvassed your views, I have not in any respect injured your feelings."

And yet with all the well-known caution he exhibited he was cowardly assassinated by one of the bloodiest monsters in crime that has ever cursed this country.

"Judge Baldwin, of California, being in Washington, called one day on General Halleck, and, presuming upon a familiar acquaintance in California a few years before, solicited a pass outside of our lines to see a brother in Virginia, not thinking that he would meet with a refusal, as both his brother and himself were good Union men.

"‘We have been deceived too often,’ said General Halleck, ‘and I regret I can’t grant it.’

Judge B. then went to Stanton, and was very briefly disposed of, with the same result. Finally, he obtained an interview with Mr. Lincoln, and stated his case.

"‘Have you applied to General Halleck?’ inquired the President.

"‘Yes, and met with a flat refusal,’ said Judge B.

"‘Then you must see Stanton,’ continued Lincoln.

“‘I have, and with the same result,’ was the reply.

“‘Well, then,’ said Mr. Lincoln, with a smile, ‘I can do nothing; for you must know *that I have very little influence with this Administration.*’”

“‘Among the various applicants at the White House one day was a well-dressed lady, who came forward, without apparent embarrassment in her air or manner, and addressed the President. Giving her a very close and scrutinizing look, he said:

“‘Well, madam, what can I do for you?’

“‘She proceeded to tell him that she lived in Alexandria; that the church where she worshipped had been taken for a hospital.

“‘What church, madam?’ Mr. Lincoln asked in a quick, nervous manner.

“‘The —— Church,’ she replied; ‘and as there are only two or three wounded soldiers in it, I came to see if you would not let us have it, as we want it very much to worship God in.’

“‘Madam, have you been to see the Post Surgeon at Alexandria about this matter?’

“‘Yes, sir; but we could do nothing with him.’

“‘Well, we put him there to attend to just such business, and it is reasonable to suppose that he knows better what should be done under the circumstances than I do. See here: you say you live in Alexandria; probably you own property there. How much will you give to assist in building a hospital?’

“‘You know, Mr. Lincoln, our property is very much embarrassed by the war;—so, really, I could hardly afford to give much for such a purpose.’

“‘Well, madam, I expect we shall have another fight soon; and my candid opinion is, *God wants that church for poor wounded Union soldiers*, as much as he does for secesh people to worship in.’ Turning to his table, he said, quite abruptly, ‘You will excuse me; I can do nothing for you. Good-day, madam.’”

HIS SIMPLICITY.

His physiological appearance clearly indicated this trait. His personal manners and official conduct evidenced it beyond the shadow of a doubt. Men wondered, as they were delighted, to find in the ruler of the republic, a freedom from affectation and pomposity, beautifully mingled with a certain simple dignity which never forsook him. Though oppressed with the weight of responsibility resting upon him as President, he shrank from assuming any of the honors, or even the titles of the position. It is said that he never spoke of himself as President, always referring to his position and office in a vague manner, as “this place,” “here,” or some other modest phrase.

Speaking of the room in the Capitol used by the Presidents of the United States during the close of a session of Congress, he thus expressed himself:

"That room, you know (dropping his voice), they call the 'President's room.'" To an intimate friend who addressed him always by his own proper title, he said: "Now call me Lincoln, and I'll promise not to tell of the breach of etiquette, if you won't; and I shall have a resting spell from "Mr. President."

In all his interviews with men he ever displayed this simplicity and artlessness. His sovereign disregard of courtly conventionalities was somewhat ludicrous, we are informed, yet his native sweetness and straightforwardness of manner disarmed criticism, and impressed the visitor that he was before a man pure, self-poised, collected, and strong in unconscious strength.

He had almost a morbid dread of what he called a "scene;" that is, demonstrations of applause which always greeted his appearance in public. The first sign of a cheer sobered him; he appeared sad and oppressed, suspended conversation, and looked out into vacancy; and when it was over resumed the conversation just where it was interrupted, with an obvious feeling of relief.

He had a morbid dislike for an escort or guard, and consequently he daily exposed himself to the deadly aim of an assassin. One morning a gentleman passing by the White House saw Lincoln standing at the gateway, looking anxiously down the street. In reply to a salutation he said: "Good morning, good morning! I am looking for a newsboy; when you

get to that corner I wish you would start one up this way." Subordinate officers would consider this beneath their position. Not so the highest officer in the nation.

Knowing his perilous situation, a cavalry guard was once placed at the gates of the White House for a while. To a friend he said privately that "he worried till he got rid of it." On more than one occasion he was known to go through the streets of Washington at a late hour of the night without escort, or even the company of a servant, walking all the way, going and returning.

An officer of the Government called one day at the White House, and introduced a clerical friend. "Mr. President," he said, "allow me to present to you my friend, the Rev. Mr. F., of ———. He has expressed a desire to see you and have some conversation with you, and I am happy to be the means of introducing him."

The President shook hands with Mr. F., and desiring him to be seated took a seat himself. Then, his countenance having assumed an air of patient waiting, he said: "I am now ready to hear what you have to say." "Oh, bless you, sir," said Mr. F., "I have nothing special to say; I merely called to pay my respects to you, and, as one of the million, to assure you of my hearty sympathy and support."

"My dear sir," said the President, rising promptly, his face showing instant relief, and with both hands

grasping that of his visitor, "I am very glad to see you, indeed. *I thought you had come to preach to me!*"

Soon after Mr. Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency, the Executive Chamber, a large fine room in the State House at Springfield was set apart for him, where he met the public until after his election.

As illustrative of the nature of many of his calls the following brace of incidents were related to Mr. Holland by an eye witness: "Mr. Lincoln, being seated in conversation with a gentleman one day, two raw, plainly-dressed young 'Suckers' entered the room, and bashfully lingered near the door. As soon as he observed them, and apprehended their embarrassment, he rose and walked to them, saying, "How do you do, my good fellows? What can I do for you? Will you sit down?" The spokesman of the pair, the shorter of the two, declined to sit, and explained the object of their call thus: he had had a talk about the relative height of Mr. Lincoln and his companion, and had asserted his belief that they were of exactly the same height. He had come in to verify his judgment. Mr. Lincoln smiled, went and got his cane, and, placing the end of it upon the wall, said:

"Here, young man, come under here."

The young man came under the cane, as Mr. Lincoln held it, and when it was perfectly adjusted to his height, Mr Lincoln said:

“Now come out, and hold up the cane.”

This he did while Mr. Lincoln stepped under. Rubbing his head back and forth to see that it worked easily under the measurement, he stepped out; and declared to the sagacious fellow who was curiously looking on, that he had guessed with remarkable accuracy—that he and the young man were exactly of the same height. Then he shook hands with them and sent them on their way. Mr. Lincoln would just as soon have thought of cutting off his right hand as he would have thought of turning those boys away with the impression that they had in any way insulted his dignity.

They had hardly disappeared when an old and modestly-dressed woman made her appearance. She knew Mr. Lincoln, but Mr. Lincoln did not at first recognize her. Then she undertook to recall to his memory certain incidents connected with his rides upon the circuit—especially his dining at her house upon the road at different times. He then remembered her and her home. Having fixed her own place in his recollection, she tried to recall to him a certain scanty dinner of bread and milk that he once ate at her house. He could not remember it—on the contrary, he only remembered that he had always fared well at her house.

“Well,” said she, “one day you came along after we had got through dinner, and we had eaten up everything, and I could give you nothing but a bowl

of bread and milk; and you ate it; and when you got up you said it was *good enough for the President of the United States!*"

The good woman had come in from the country, making a journey of eight or ten miles, to relate to Mr. Lincoln this incident, which, in her mind, had doubtless taken the form of prophesy. Mr. Lincoln placed the honest creature at her ease, chatted with her of old times, and dismissed her in the most happy and complacent frame of mind.

HIS LARGE-HEARTEDNESS.

This feature was very clearly manifested in his well-rounded character. We have an early instance of this while he was yet but a youth.

"One evening while returning from a 'raising' in his wide neighborhood, with a number of companions, he discovered a straying horse, with saddle and bridle upon him. The horse was recognized as belonging to a man who was accustomed to excess in drink, and it was suspected at once that the owner was not far off. A short search only was necessary to confirm the suspicions of the young men.

"The poor drunkard was found in a perfectly helpless condition, upon the chilly ground. Abraham's companions urged the cowardly policy of leaving him to his fate, but young Lincoln would not hear to the proposition. At his request the miserable sot was lifted to his shoulders, and he actually carried

him eighty rods to the nearest house. Sending word to his father that he should not be back that night, with the reason for his absence, he attended and nursed the man until the morning, and had the pleasure of believing that he had saved his life."

An amusing incident occurred in connection with "riding the circuit," which gives a pleasant glimpse into the good lawyer's heart. He was riding by a deep slough, in which, to his exceeding pain, he saw a pig struggling, and with such faint efforts that it was evident that he could not extricate himself from the mud. Mr. Lincoln looked at the pig and the mud which enveloped him, and then looked at some new clothes with which he had but a short time before enveloped himself. Deciding against the claims of the pig, he rode on, but he could not get rid of the vision of the poor brute, and, at last, after riding two miles, he turned back, determined to rescue the animal at the expense of his new clothes. Arriving at the spot, he tied his horse, and coolly went to work to build of old rails a passage to the bottom of the hole. Descending on these rails, he seized the pig and dragged him out, but not without serious damage to the clothes he wore. Washing his hands in the nearest brook, and wiping them on the grass, he mounted his gig and rode along. He then fell to examining the motive that sent him back to the release of the pig. At the first thought it seemed to be pure benevolence,

but, at length, he came to the conclusion that it was selfishness, for he certainly went to the pig's relief in order (as he said to the friend to whom he related the incident) to "take a pain out of his own mind." This is certainly a new view of the nature of sympathy, and one which it will be well for the casuist to examine.

Soon after Mr. Lincoln entered upon his profession at Springfield, he was engaged in a criminal case in which it was thought there was little chance of success. Throwing all his powers into it, he came off victorious, and promptly received for his services five hundred dollars. A legal friend calling upon him the next morning found him setting before a table, upon which his money was spread out, counting it over and over.

"Look here, Judge," said Lincoln; "See what a heap of money I've got from the —— case. Did you ever see anything like it? Why, I never had so much money in my life before, put it all together!" Then crossing his arms upon the table, his manner sobering down, he added: "I have got just five hundred dollars: if it were only seven hundred and fifty I would go directly and purchase a quarter section of land, and settle it upon my old step-mother."

His friend said that if the deficiency was all he needed he would loan him the amount, taking his note, to which Mr. Lincoln instantly acceded.

His friend then said: "Lincoln, I would not do just

what you have indicated. Your step-mother is getting old, and will not probably live many years. I would settle the property upon her for her use during her lifetime, to revert to you upon her death."

With much feeling, Mr. Lincoln replied: "I shall do no such thing. It is a poor return, at the best, for all the good woman's devotion and fidelity to me, and there is not going to be any half-way business about it;" and so saying, he gathered up his money and proceeded forthwith to carry his long-cherished purpose into execution.

It was not possible for Mr. Lincoln to regard his clients simply in the light of business. An unfortunate man was a subject of his sympathy. A Mr. Codgal, who related the incident to Mr. Holland, met with a financial wreck in 1843. He employed Mr. Lincoln as his lawyer, and at the close of the business gave him a note to cover the regular lawyer's fees. He was soon after blown up by an accidental discharge of powder, and lost his hand. Meeting Mr. Lincoln some time after the accident on the steps of the State House, the kind lawyer asked him how he was getting along.

"Badly enough," replied Mr. Codgal, "I am both broken up in business and crippled." Then he added, "I have been thinking about that note of yours."

Mr. Lincoln, who had probably known all about Mr. Codgal's troubles, and had prepared himself for the meeting, took out his pocket-book, and saying,

with a laugh, "Well, you needn't think any more about it," handed him the note.

Mr. Codgal protesting, Mr. Lincoln said, "if you had the money I would not take it," and hurried away.

At this same date he was frankly writing about his poverty to his friends, as a reason for not making them a visit, and probably found it no easy task to take care of his family, even when board at the Globe Tavern was "only four dollars a week."

HIS HONESTY.

This innate quality began to develop itself in the morning of his days. Once while clerking in Denton Offutt's store at New Salem, Ill., he sold a woman a little bill of goods, amounting in value by the reckoning, to two dollars six and a quarter cents. He received the money, and the woman went away. On adding the items of the bill again, to make himself sure of correctness, he found that he had taken six and a quarter cents too much. It was night, and, closing and locking the store, he started out on foot, a distance of two or three miles, for the house of his defrauded customer, and, delivering over to her the sum whose possession had so much troubled him, went home satisfied.

On another occasion, just as he was closing the store for the night, a woman entered, and asked for a half pound of tea. The tea was weighed out and

paid for, and the store was left for the night. The next morning Lincoln entered to begin the duties of the day, when he discovered a four-ounce weight on the scales. He saw at once that he had made a mistake, and shutting the store he took a long walk before breakfast to deliver the remainder of the tea. These may seem trivial incidents, but they serve to show how the principles of honesty and honor were ingrained in his youthful nature; hence it was easy for him to exhibit the same principles through all his subsequent career. In fact, it was at Offut's store that he acquired the distinction of "Honest Abe." "Honest Young Abe" is the best comment on the proverbial expression, "Honest Old Abe." How true the words of the royal sage, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Thomas and Nancy Lincoln instilled these principles of honesty and righteousness into the youthful mind of their promising son, and never did they forsake him.

One of the most beautiful exhibitions of Mr. Lincoln's rigid honesty occurred in connection with the settlement of his accounts with the Post-Office Department.

It was after he had become a lawyer and had been a legislator. He had passed through a period of great poverty, had acquired his education in the law in the midst of many perplexities, inconveniences,

and hardships, and had met with temptations such as few men could resist to make a temporary use of any money he might have in his hands.

One day, seated in the law office of his partner, the agent of the Post-Office Department entered, and inquired if Abraham Lincoln was within. Mr. Lincoln responded to his name, and was informed that the agent had called to collect a balance due the Department since the discontinuance of the New Salem office. A shade of perplexity passed over Mr. Lincoln's face which did not escape the notice of friends who were present. One of them said at once: "Lincoln, if you are in want of money let us help you." He made no reply, but suddenly rose and pulled out from a pile of books a little old trunk, and returning to the table, asked the agent how much the amount of his debt was. The sum was named, and then Mr. Lincoln opened the trunk, pulled out a little package of coin wrapped in a cotton rag, and *counted out the exact sum*, amounting to something more than seventeen dollars.

After the agent had left the room he remarked quietly that he never used any man's money but his own. Although this sum had been in his hands during all these years, he had never regarded it as available, even for any temporary purpose of his own.

About the time Mr. Lincoln began to be known as a successful lawyer, he was waited upon by a lady who held a real-estate claim which she desired to

have him prosecute, putting into his hands, with the necessary papers, a check for two hundred and fifty dollars, as a retaining fee. Mr. Lincoln said he would look the case over, and asked her to call again the next day. Upon presenting herself, Mr. Lincoln told her that he had gone through the papers very carefully, and he must tell her frankly that there was not a "peg" to hang her claim upon, and he could not conscientiously advise her to bring an action. The lady was satisfied, and, thanking him, rose to go.

"Wait," said Mr. Lincoln, fumbling in his vest pocket; "here is the check you left with me."

"But, Mr. Lincoln," returned the lady, "I think you have earned *that*."

"No, no," he responded, handing it back to her; "that would not be right. I can't take *pay* for doing my duty."

A little fact in Lincoln's Work will illustrate his ever-present desire to deal honestly and justly with men. He had always a partner in his professional life, and, when he went out upon the circuit this partner was usually at home. While out he frequently took up and disposed of cases that were never entered at the office. In these cases, after receiving his fees, he divided the money in his pocket-book, labeling each sum (wrapped in a piece of paper) that belonged to his partner, stating his name and the case on which it was received. He could not be

content to keep an account. He divided the money so that if he, by any casualty should fail of an opportunity to pay it over, there could be no dispute as to the exact amount that was his partner's due. This may seem trivial, nay, boyish, but it was like Mr. Lincoln.

A sheep-grower on a certain occasion sold a number of sheep at a stipulated average price. When he delivered the animals he delivered many lambs, or sheep too young to come fairly within the terms of the contract. He was sued for damages by the injured party, and Mr. Lincoln was his attorney. At the trial the facts as to the character of the sheep delivered were proved, and several witnesses testified as to the usage by which all under a certain age were regarded as lambs, and of inferior value. Mr. Lincoln on comprehending the facts at once changed his line of effort and confined himself to ascertaining the real number of inferior sheep delivered. On addressing the jury, he said that from the facts proved they must give a verdict against his client, and he only asked their scrutiny as to the actual damage suffered.

In another case Mr. Lincoln was conducting a suit against a railroad company. Judgment having been given in his favor and the court being about to allow the amount claimed by him, deducting a proved and allowed offset, he rose and stated that his opponents had not proved all that was justly due them in the

offset, and proceeded to state and allow a further sum against his client, which the court allowed in its judgment. His desire for the establishment of exact justice overcame his own selfish love of victory, as well as his partiality for his clients' feelings and interests.

When his clients had practiced gross deception upon him, Mr. Lincoln forsook their cases in mid-passage; and he always refused to accept fees of those whom he advised not to prosecute. On one occasion, while engaged upon an important case, he discovered that he was on the wrong side. His associate in the case was immediately informed that he (Lincoln) would not make the plea. The associate made it, and the case, much to the surprise of Lincoln, was decided for his client. Perfectly convinced that his client was wrong, he would not receive one cent of the fee of nine hundred dollars which he paid. It is not wonderful that one who knew him well spoke of him as "perversely honest."

It is interesting to recall the fact that at one time Mr. Lincoln seriously took into consideration the project of learning the blacksmith's trade. He was without means, and felt the immediate necessity of undertaking some business that would give him bread. It was while he was entertaining this project that an event occurred which, in his undetermined state of mind, seemed to open a way to success in another quarter.

A man named Reuben Radford, the keeper of a small store in the village of New Salem, had somehow incurred the displeasure of the Clary's Grove Boys, who had exercised their "regulating" prerogatives by irregularly breaking in his windows. William G. Greene, a friend of young Lincoln, riding by Radford's store soon afterward, was hailed by him and told that he intended to sell out. Mr. Greene went into the store, and, looking around, offered him at random four hundred dollars for his stock. The offer was immediately accepted.

Lincoln happening in next day, and being familiar with the value of the goods, Mr. Greene proposed to him to take an inventory of the stock and see what sort of a bargain he had made. This he did, and it was found that the goods were worth six hundred dollars. Lincoln then made him an offer of a hundred and twenty-five dollars for his bargain, with the proposition that he and a man named Berry, as his partner, should take his (Greene's) place in the notes given to Radford. Mr. Greene agreed to the arrangement, but Radford declined it except on condition that Greene would be their security, and this he at last assented to.

Berry proved to be a dissipated, trifling man, and the business soon became a wreck. Mr. Greene was obliged to go in and help Mr. Lincoln close it up, and not only do this but pay Radford's notes. All that young Lincoln won from the store was some

very valuable experience, and the burden of a debt to Greene which, in conversation with the latter, he always spoke of as the *National debt*. But this national debt, unlike the majority of those which bear the title, was paid to the uttermost farthing in after years.

Six years afterwards, Mr. Greene, who knew nothing of the law in such cases and had not troubled himself to inquire about it, and who had in the meantime removed to Tennessee, received a notice from Mr. Lincoln that he was ready to pay him what he had paid for Berry—he (Lincoln) being legally bound to pay the liabilities of his partner.

So popular was this trait that “Honest Old Abe” had become a proverbial saying. He disliked innuendoes, concealments and subterfuges. No sort of approach at official jobbing ever had any encouragement. With him the question was not “Is it convenient? Is it expedient?” but “Is it right?” He steadily discountenanced all practices of Government officers using any part of the public fund for temporary purposes, and he loved to tell of his own experience when he was saved from embarrassment by his rigid adherence to a good rule. We might adduce numerous proofs of this creditable feature in his character, but it is not necessary. We may be allowed to repeat that his honesty seemed to spring from his early religious training and strong religious convictions.

It was his habit, when conversing of things which intimately concerned himself to say that however he might be misapprehended by men who did not appear to know him, he was glad to know that no thought or intent of his escaped the observation of that Judge whose final decree he expected to stand or fall in this world and the next. He has indeed left behind him a name for honesty which time can never obliterate. Yes, "Honest Old Abe" has passed into the language of our time and country as a synonym for all that is just and honest in man.

HIS REVERENCE FOR THE BIBLE AND TRUST IN GOD.

"The Bible," he said, "he found to be the richest store-house." True he read other books. He loved philosophical works, particularly Butler's "Analogy of Religion;" Stuart Mill on "Liberty," and President Edwards on the "Will." He greatly enjoyed also books of a humorous character. The variety and change he found beneficial. But the Bible was his constant study. Not a day passed but he thoughtfully perused it. Large portions of it were exceedingly familiar to him. Whole chapters of Isaiah, the New Testament, and the Psalms being fixed in his memory, he would sometimes correct a misquotation of Scripture, giving generally the chapter and verse where it might be found.

The late lamented J. G. Holland says: "Lincoln was a religious man. The fact may be stated without any reservation—with only an explanation. He believed in God, and in his personal supervision of the affairs of men. He believed himself to be under his control and guidance. He believed in the power and ultimate triumph of the right, through his belief in God."

The late Hon. Newton Bateman relates a moving incident in the life of our hero. Anxious to know how the Springfield ministers intended to vote, and finding that the great majority of them were opposed to him, he turned to Mr. Bateman, and in sad surprise said:

" 'Here are twenty-three ministers, of different denominations, and all of them are against me but three, and here are a great many prominent members of the churches, a very large majority are against me. Mr. Bateman, I am not a Christian,—God knows I would be one,—but I have carefully read the Bible, and I do not so understand this book ;' and he drew forth a pocket New Testament. 'These men well know,' he continued, 'that I am for freedom in the Territories, freedom everywhere as free as the Constitution and laws will permit, and that my opponents are for slavery. They *know* this, and yet, with this book in their hands, in the light of which human bondage can not live a moment, they are going to vote against me ; I do not understand it at all.'

“Here Mr. Lincoln paused—paused for long minutes—his features surcharged with emotion. Then he rose and walked up and down the reception-room in the effort to retain or regain his self-possession. Stopping at last he said, with a trembling voice and cheeks wet with tears: ‘I know there is a God, and that he hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that his hand is in it. If he has a place and work for me, and I think that he has, I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but Truth is everything. I know I am right, because I know that liberty is right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God. I have told them that a house divided against itself can not stand; and Christ and Reason say the same; and they will find it so.

“‘Douglas don’t care whether slavery is voted up or down, but God cares, and humanity cares, and I care; and with God’s help I shall not fail. I may not see the end; but it will come, and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find that they have not read their Bible right.’

“Much of this was uttered as if he was speaking to himself, and with a sad, earnest solemnity of manner impossible to be described. After a pause, he resumed: ‘Doesn’t it appear strange that men can ignore the moral aspect of this contest? A revelation could not make it plainer to me that slavery or the Government must be destroyed. The future would be something awful, as I look at it, but for

this rock on which I stand' (alluding to the Testament which he still held in his hand), 'especially with the knowledge of how these ministers are going to vote. It seems as if God had borne with this thing (slavery) until the very teachers of religion had come to defend it from the Bible, and to claim for it a divine character and sanction; and now the cup of iniquity is full, and the vials of wrath will be poured out.' After this the conversation was continued for a long time. Everything he said was of a peculiarly, deep, tender, and religious tone, and all was tinged with a touching melancholy. He repeatedly referred to his conviction that the day of wrath was at hand, and that he was to be an actor in the terrible struggle which would issue in the overthrow of slavery, though he might not live to see the end.

"After further reference to a belief in Divine Providence and the fact of God in history, the conversation turned upon prayer. He freely stated his belief in the duty, privilege, and efficacy of prayer, and intimated, in no unmistakable terms, that he had sought in that way the Divine guidance and favor. The effect of this conversation upon the mind of Mr. Bateman, a Christian gentleman whom Mr. Lincoln profoundly respected, was to convince him that Mr. Lincoln had, in his quiet way, found a path to the Christian standpoint—that he had found God, and rested on the eternal truth of God. As the two men were about to separate, Mr. Bateman remarked: 'I

have not supposed you were accustomed to think so much upon this class of subjects; certainly your friends generally are ignorant of the sentiments you have expressed to me.' He replied quickly: 'I know they are, but I think more on these subjects than upon all others, and I have done so for years; and I am willing you should know it.'"

The Rev. Mr. Willets, of Brooklyn, gives an account of a conversation with Mr. Lincoln, on the part of a lady of his acquaintance connected with the "Christian Commission," who in the prosecution of her duties had several interviews with him.

The President, it seemed, had been much impressed with the devotion and earnestness of purpose manifested by the lady, and on one occasion, after she had discharged the object of her visit, he said to her:

"Mrs. ———, I have formed a high opinion of your Christian character, and now, as we are alone, I have a mind to ask you to give me, in brief, your idea of what constitutes a true religious experience."

The lady replied at some length, stating that, in her judgment, it consisted of a conviction of one's own sinfulness and weakness, and personal need of the Saviour for strength and support; that views of mere doctrine might and would differ, but when one was really brought to feel his need of Divine help, and to seek the aid of the Holy Spirit for strength and guidance, it was satisfactory evidence of his

having been born again. This was the substance of her reply.

When she had concluded, Mr. Lincoln was very thoughtful for a few moments. He at length said, very earnestly : " If what you have told me is really a correct view of this great subject, I think I can say with sincerity that I hope I am a Christian. I had lived," he continued, " until my boy Willie died, without fully realizing these things. That blow overwhelmed me. It showed me my weakness as I had never felt it before, and if I can take what you have stated as a *test*, I think I can safely say that I know something of that *change* of which you speak ; and I will further add, that it has been my intention for some time, at a suitable opportunity, to make a public religious profession."

Speaking of his own age and strength, he once quoted with admiration the passage of Scripture : " His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." Little did he know that like Moses of old he was to stand as it were on Pisgah, and see a peaceful and fruitful land which he was not to enter.

His trust in and dependence on God was implicit. When he was misunderstood or misrepresented, his refuge was his God, to whom he always fled in times of trouble.

There was something touching in his childlike and simple reliance upon Divine aid, especially in his extreme trial. Though the reading of the Scriptures

and prayer were his constant habit, yet on such occasions he sought with greater earnestness than ever that strength which is provided when mortal help fails.

His address on the occasion of his re-inauguration can never be forgotten. His acknowledgement of the Supreme Being and his providence and rule, are interwoven through all his later speeches, letters, and messages. Once he said, "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day. But alas! the God-fearing, Bible-reading, liberty-loving, model President was hurled into a premature grave by the hand of a commonplace actor and cowardly assassin.

On the memorable morning of Saturday, April 15th, 1865, he breathed his last, and his emancipated spirit winged its flight into the bosom of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

In his funeral discourse his pastor, Rev. D. P. Gurley, D.D., quotes the immortal martyr-president as having uttered these significant words during the serious commotion of those days: "Gentlemen, my hope of success in this great and terrible struggle rests on that immutable foundation, the justice and goodness of God, and when events are very threatening, and prospects very dark, I still hope that in some way which man cannot see, all will be well in

the end, because our cause is just and God is on our side." This reminds us of the sublime and characteristic reply he once made to a clergyman, who during the war expressed to the President, that he *hoped* the Lord was on our side. "I am not at all concerned about that," was the reply, "for I know that the Lord is *always* on the side of right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side."

The late lamented Bishop Simpson, who knew the President intimately, said in his funeral oration: "Abraham Lincoln was a good man. He was known as an honest, temperate, forgiving man; a just man, a man of noble heart in every way. As to his religious experience I cannot speak definitely, because I was not privileged to know much of his private sentiments. My acquaintance with him did not give me the opportunity to hear him speak on those topics. This I know, however, he read the Bible frequently—loved it for its great truths and profound teachings, and he tried to be guided by its precepts. He believed in Christ, the Saviour of sinners, and I think he was sincerely trying to bring his life into harmony with the great principles of revealed religion. Certainly if there ever was a man who illustrated some of the principles of pure religion, that man was our departed President. Look over all his speeches, listen to his utterances; he never spoke unkindly of any man. Even the rebels received no

words of anger from him, and the last days of his life illustrated in a remarkable manner his forgiving disposition."

Yes! the martyr-president gave every evidence that he was a converted man. His parents' prayers were not unanswered, nor his mother's teachings vain in the Lord. The death of a favorite son was sanctified to his spiritual good, and led him to seek life eternal in Jesus Christ his Lord. His numerous utterances and notable traits demonstrated that he had been with Jesus and learned of him. When his sun of life set in the declining West, it simply set to rise in the everlasting East.

The hymn composed by William Cullen Bryant at his demise is a faithful portraiture of our subject :

O, slow to smite and swift to spare,
Gentle and merciful and just,
Who in the fear of God did'st bear
The sword of power, the nation's trust.

In sorrow by thy bier we stand,
Amid the woe that hushes all,
And speak the anguish of a land
That shook with horror at thy fall.

Thy task is done, the bond are free—
We bear thee to an honored grave,
Whose noblest monument shall be
The broken fetters of the slave.

Pure was thy life—its bloody close
Hath placed thee with the sons of light,
Among the noblest host of those
Who perished in the cause of right.

THE ADJUDICATION

BY

REV. W. C. ROBERTS, D.D.,

Secretary of Presbyterian Home Missions, New York.

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